

Chapter Five -

Sportswomen of the Waimakariri.

Over the years women have played an unsung role in the many small rural communities and towns of the Waimakariri district. This has been obvious in many ways and none more so than in the many sports clubs throughout the area. Sport has played a very large part in the lives of people as a social experience as much as an athletic outlet. On any Saturday over the years there have been many folk meeting together to take part in netball, tennis, bowls and golf matches to name but a few. Often the participants will not be great achievers but they will all be taking part in one of the most important community activities available to them. Over afternoon tea news will be exchanged and wider social circles will be being formed enabling country society to be established. The strength of communities can often be gauged by the opportunities available for social exchange because it is from these contacts that the fabric of a healthy, caring society is being woven. Clubs have often struggled to match the resources of big city clubs but the selfless fundraising work of many have seen facilities provided that would grace a much bigger social group. To drive through the area and see the number of halls, courts and swimming pools, golf courses and bowling greens that have been provided is testimony to the strength of the communities. Add to this the many working bees necessary to look after the facilities and keep them running smoothly and a picture of a very active and involved community results. Many a romance began with meetings at the local tennis club, followed up by dates at the various sports dances arranged in the area!

In the early days of New Zealand society women were not so active in competitive sports but nevertheless participation was very popular. As girls' schools adapted their programmes to offer similar opportunities as those available at boys' schools so girls became more involved in sporting activities. Team sports were praised highly as builders of character, and early on they became the focus for girls as well as for boys. Admittedly there were some barriers placed in the way of young ladies becoming

involved in some of the more robust sports. It was, nevertheless, common at many smaller rural primary schools to see all children taking part in all sports so that teams could be made up. Many a small girl would prove to have the potential to be a rugby star but find that netball provided a more acceptable outlet for her physical endeavours! Participation in a wide range of activities has been a marked feature of life in country areas and this broad general experience has had a very powerful influence in developing all round sporting skills. The hand-eye co-ordination activities needed in many sports can be transferred from one to another as can the team building attributes, the fitness and the strategic understanding necessary in any team sport. This perhaps explains why so many leading New Zealand sports people have learnt their skills in rural areas.



The Hinemoa Hockey Club before its first match against a Christchurch team at Kaiapoi Park in 1897- Courtesy Hinemoa Hockey Club

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The Hinemoa Hockey Club before its first match against a Christchurch team at Kaiapoi Park in 1897- Courtesy Hinemoa Hockey Club

Within the Waimakariri there have been many innovative sporting activities. It is with some pride that the area can look to the formation of the Hinemoa Women's Hockey Club in 1896 - the first women's hockey club in New Zealand. In the early days players from the area represented Canterbury and New Zealand, leading the way with the skill development necessary for this achievement. The Hinemoa Club was unbeaten for its first three years of life, proudly claiming the title of Southern Hemisphere Champions. When the Canterbury Association was formed in 1908, the first President was Mrs Pearce whose five daughters dominated hockey for the period up until the first World War. Perhaps the most famous of these five sisters was Mrs Myrtle Leslie who played for Canterbury and New Zealand capping off her remarkable career by scoring Canterbury's three goals against the visiting English team in 1914. Canterbury's victory was proudly hailed and equally proudly supported by Kaiapoi as there were three of the Pearce sisters in that victorious team. The five sisters: Myrtle, Pansey, Hazel, Doll and Ivy ensured that Hinemoa dominated those early years of hockey and they were joined by other Canterbury representatives Lilly Rule, Rose Adams (Smith) and many others. Mrs Pearce's contribution to hockey saw her involved until 1941 and Mrs Leslie was still involved into the fifties. These proud years have never quite been recaptured but when the club celebrated its 80 years in 1976 there were still many fine players to remember. Amongst these are Mabel McAllister, the Oram girls and many others who had reached representative status.

Although hockey remained a popular sport in the area, it always took second place to netball as the preferred winter sport for young ladies. Nevertheless, the Rangiora Women's Hockey Club, founded in the 1920's developed a strong tradition. Later the View Hill Hockey Club, affiliated to the Malvern Association, brought the sport to the Oxford area. These three clubs have produced fine players although many of them found they had to transfer to city clubs to further their own sporting careers. Both Hinemoa and Rangiora over the years have had teams that achieved well at senior or premier level in the Canterbury competition but latterly both clubs have struggled to have teams with enough skilled and experienced players to have a team which can compete on equal terms with the city clubs. However in the 1950's the Hinemoa Club's senior team produced Joan Capstick (Brown) who gained representative honours for Canterbury. One of the most successful players of this era was Ailsa Judson (Giles) who learned her hockey in this area. Ailsa who represented New Zealand at hockey in the early 1960's, was perhaps the most successful player of the latter period. Ailsa's sporting contribution was not limited to hockey, however, as she also represented the South Island at cricket. Since retiring from these sports Ailsa's involvement in sport has continued with participation in squash, at the Oxford Squash Club, golf at the Waimakariri Club and croquet. This breadth of interest and achievement resulted in Ailsa's being chosen as the sportswoman who had achieved most highly in a range of sports at the special Women's Suffrage Sportswomen's Dinner held in 1993. Henrietta Latimer (Carroll)

is another representative hockey player from the area and while much of her club play was for the Carlton club in Christchurch she nevertheless had earlier experiences with the Hinemoa Club. She returned to the district to coach and play in the Rangiora Women's Hockey Club. In the 1980's Hinemoa had a batch of successful young players who represented Canterbury under age and senior teams. Karen Hawker, Anna Baldwin, Louise Good, Jenni Adams and Lisa Cassidy all performed admirably for these teams. Niki Adams, Karen Croucher, Hayley Sheehan, Adele Carroll were all representatives for Canterbury teams from the Hinemoa Club. Primary school players, Emily Allrey and Nicola Pullan maintained the Club's name in the Canterbury centre. Judy Hawker, Jill Cassidy and Kath Adams, administrators with the Club, from the 1970's to 1990's have all assisted with Canterbury teams as selectors, coaches or managers.

Over the years the Rangiora Club has had a similar history of involvement with the Canterbury Women's Hockey Association. In the early days the game was played under the name of Rangiora Physical Culture Club with one of its most successful periods being in the 1920's. From 1925 for four years the club won the Christchurch Senior Competition. In 1926 three players were chosen to play in New Zealand's Premier Hockey competition the "K" Cup. In 1928, reflecting Rangiora's strong position, there were eight players representing Canterbury with Aileen Bruere (Smith) as Captain. About this time a New Zealand team was selected to tour South Africa and this team had three Rangiora players - a remarkable achievement. They were Aileen Bruere, Joan Parsons and Freda Schluter. Unfortunately this team did not travel but it was economics not politics that prevented teams travelling in those days. The Club had another prosperous period in the 1960's with Joan Robertson and May Rowlands re-introducing high school and primary school hockey. From this era came Cynthia Ashe (Rands) and Marion Cottam (Archer) who are still current members of the Club today. These two and other enthusiasts have been involved for many years running the Club and maintaining a strong skill base. Bronwyn Downes and Jill Searle are two who have been very active in playing, coaching and developing the sport. Like Hinemoa, Rangiora has seen players move from their junior teams to town clubs but several of these represented Canterbury either while still playing in Rangiora or soon after. Janelle Pulley in the 1990's was involved in this way, representing Canterbury Under 21. Liz Reeves has recently represented Canterbury as well. Currently Margaret Huckstep is very involved in the administration of the sport at New Zealand level. The Rangiora Club has now amalgamated with the men's club in line with national moves and is in good heart with four teams playing in competitions in town.

In the View Hill area the same pattern of involvement has been seen with devoted service from the administrators providing opportunities for people in their area. The Frahm family has been very involved with this Club and in the Oxford sporting world in general. Judy Frahm has been fully committed to hockey with her service being seen in the Malvern

Association. Judy, Annette Eggleston and Anne Smith have all shared the positions running the View Hill Club and have been involved with the various roles of coaches and managers of Malvern teams. Sally Frahm is another of the all round sportswomen the area has produced and while she has played hockey with distinction she has also been successful in cricket and squash. The Weavers family has achieved distinction in the world of hockey too but after primary school experience they moved to teams in Christchurch. Both Dianna and Phillipa Weavers have been members of the successful Burnside club team which has boasted many Premier successes. They have already represented Canterbury senior teams and are well on the way to national consideration after being included in New Zealand under age teams for several years.

Netball as a sport has taken a different course from hockey. Instead of being involved with Canterbury it has staked an independent path with the North Canterbury Sub Association and the Canterbury Country Union. In 1928 the North Canterbury Association had its first meeting with competitions developing from that time. It is with netball (basketball) from this time that the contribution of women in this area has been most marked. On any Saturday from March to August there will be crowds of enthusiastic players crowding the Rangiora courts. Over the years the number of courts has increased as more and more players became involved in the game. While on any winter evening in any of the many small communities flood lights will be on as the teams hone up their skills for the weekly encounters. Evidence of the strength of the sport is in the fact that there are twenty two clubs in the Waimakariri District area and many of these clubs have several teams. There is an enormous commitment of time and effort given to running these clubs and at the 1993 Sportswomen's Dinner it was not surprising that there were many netball coaches, players and administrators nominated for top awards. It was also a feature of the citations written for these women that their years of service were life long. The contributions of Joan Smith and Moya Robinson in coaching, selecting and managing Canterbury Country teams as well as school and club teams were recognised with a joint award for the administrator who has made the most valuable contribution to her sport or sports. Both these women were teachers whose motivating and teaching skills contributed to their ability to get the best out of players. They showed not only these personal skills but also the analytical skills necessary to coach effectively. Joan and Moya capped off very successful playing careers in the 1940's and 1950's with their coaching efforts of the latter years. Canterbury Country were most successful under these two coaches in periods through the 1970's and 1980's. Moya brought her charges up to the second section of New Zealand netball and Joan's team made it to the top section where it performed very creditably. Unfortunately Canterbury Country's success has not been quite so marked in recent years.

Not far behind these two in contribution to Country Netball was Dorothy Simpson from the Ohoka Club. Her contribution brought recognition with Life Membership of the Association. Another well

known worker for netball was Winifred Borrell whose efforts were instrumental in beginning the work that led to the creation of the Dudley Park complex in Rangiora. Her work began in the 1930's with her ceaseless efforts to improve facilities for young people and continued on until the 1970's. Margaret Ivory and Barbara Thompson from the Oxford area have been instrumental in building up clubs for the many keen participants. It is significant that many of these people were successful players who have given back much to their sport in assisting others. In the 1950's Lois Watson from the North Canterbury area was in the first New Zealand team to tour Fiji and although she has now retired to Auckland her first association was certainly with the local area. Since that time many girls have shown very real skills in this sport without reaching national prominence but the one who has gained recognition at the highest level is Wai Taumanu who captained the New Zealand team. She proved to be a popular and skilful player. Wai was born in Kaiapoi and although much of her playing career was in other areas, her name will always be proudly remembered in Kaiapoi. Another who may reach this high level is Julie Dawson who captained a very promising Junior Silver Ferns team in 1993. She was awarded the title of most successful sportswoman in a range of sports since 1990 for this achievement as well as for her prominence in tennis. It is obvious that many of the most successful netball players are also very skilful tennis players and it is without a doubt these two sports which have contributed in a major way to the young women of the region's sporting and social lives.

With tennis there are also many who have achieved well as players and in setting up clubs, running coaching programmes for juniors and doing the hundred and one jobs necessary to keep a club functioning. In the Rangiora Club, a noted player of earlier days was Betty Fraser who was the Club champion for twenty years from 1932 to 1952 - a quite remarkable record. Not content with playing, Betty was also a club official for several years. In recognition of her work she was named Patron in 1984. Betty's work has not only been in the field of tennis but also golf. As well as being a successful player in this sport, Betty's personal skills were recognised by her selection as the non playing captain of the New Zealand Women's Golf team in 1982. This team performed with distinction when it won the British Teams' Stroke play event and then gained second place in the Espirito Santo World Tournament in Geneva. These successes were due to the guiding hand of Betty Fraser. Betty has been prominent in the administration of women's golf in Canterbury and New Zealand as an office bearer and selector. For this service she has been made a Life Member of the New Zealand Ladies' Golf Union - a rare honour. Besides being patron of the Rangiora Tennis Club she has also been chosen as Patron of the Rangiora Golf Club. This sporting achievement and service are unparalleled in the District by a woman.

In the Rangiora Tennis Club another to provide valuable service has been Chrissie Escott who coached the juniors for fifteen years from 1950 to 1965 while also being a committee member. For this work she has

deservedly been awarded Life Membership. Like many women in this area Chrissie's contribution to tennis was paralled by valuable service to netball. When Chrissie gave up her position as coach of the tennis juniors, Maureen Fraser took over and held the responsibility for the next five years. At this time Maureen also served on the committee and as Club Captain from 1966 to 1971. She was made a Life Member in 1973 and Patron in 1977. Perhaps not surprisingly, Maureen too, was a netball enthusiast. Kay Woods also worked as Junior Coach in the 1960's and 1970's gaining Life Membership in 1975. She was also a North Canterbury representative for many years. Two others to play a big role as representatives for North Canterbury and long service committee members have been Linore Broadfoot and Elizabeth Brocherie. Both women have been awarded Life Membership of the Rangiora Club. Not content with working in their own club all have served for the good of the sport in general with work for players right through from junior level to veterans' grade.

Kaiapoi Tennis Club has also been fortunate with in the calibre of the women they have had playing and coaching. Melva Adams has been one who has been selfless in giving of her time to assist players, especially juniors. Melva is approaching the close of her remarkable sporting career but still performs very creditably on a tennis court! Melva is another who has moved into the field of golf and while she has achieved a high level of playing ability, it is in encouraging new players that she has made her singular contribution. A one time member of the Hinemoa Hockey Club, Melva is typical of women administrators and workers who have played such a big part in the North Canterbury sporting world. Another to contribute as player and coach for the Kaiapoi Tennis Club has been Lois Hawthorne. She has been an astute coach and motivator as well as being a model for many players with her sporting attitudes and determined playing.

In the smaller clubs throughout the region there are many others who have played similar roles. In the Loburn area Jenny Crofts is one such person. For her work in the Loburn Tennis Club she, too, has been made a Life Member of her club. Besides being a successful player, she has served as junior coach for a total of fourteen years, has been secretary and fostered mid week tennis for women in the area. With Jenny's involvement the Club has prospered after a period of near extinction. Carol Pearce and her sister Dawn Cooper are two tennis players who have performed very well in competitions both in Christchurch and in the country districts, representing the Fernside Club.

Amongst some of the younger sportswomen who were finalists in the Women's Suffrage Sportswomen's Presentation were several young women who have achieved a very high standard in the classic sports of tennis and netball. Although they have not necessarily gained representative status they nevertheless have showed promise that no doubt will see their talents displayed for many years to come. From the Kaiapoi area the Bailey family, with mother Colleen has proved to be a redoubtable opponent at tennis, as have her daughters, Karen and Suzanne. The

latter is a sportswoman whose talents were recognised with a nomination for the Sportswomen's dinner. Karen Ward from Rangiora is another who has continued a family tradition with achievement in a range of sports. She has performed well in netball and tennis. Karen is currently the Captain of the Canterbury Country Netball team. Her family goes back two generations with her mother, Joan Ward (Eder) being a well known tennis player following in the footsteps of her mother, Lucy Eder, who contributed to this sport through the Woodend Tennis Club. Another family to shine in local sport has been the Robinson family with Moya's netball success being repeated on the tennis court. Both Moya and her sister, Peg Robinson, were North Canterbury representative tennis players.

Besides achievement in the recognised sports the Waimakariri District area boasts many sportswomen who have performed in some less traditional sports. With the river and sea close by aquatic sports have featured. The Waimakariri Yacht Club has always had girls who have acted as crew members in racing crafts and provides opportunities for girls to manage craft single handed. Perhaps the most successful of these has been Michelle Holland who represented New Zealand in world women's events with distinction. She has also proved an expert crew member in a range of yachts.

Any commentary on the sporting women of the Waimakariri must dwell more than briefly on the achievements of the Bakers — some would say the fabulous Baker girls. Direct descendents of Sarah Baker, who features in the Colonial Women chapter of this book, and brought up in Kaiapoi, Maureen, Erin and Phillipa Baker have achieved sporting prominence at national, and in the cases of the latter two, international levels, that surely rank them among the most outstanding sports people to have come from the Waimakariri District.

The eldest, Maureen, started her sporting career with the Kaiapoi Marching Team under Mrs Melrose. She developed an interest in the modern sports of aerobics and body building, succeeding at the highest level. In 1986 Maureen won the New Zealand Aerobics Championship and in 1987 she was the Women's Body Building Champion for Oceania. She has retained her interest in these sports through her management of the Les Mills Gym in Christchurch.

Erin Baker began as a swimmer turning to running at the age of fourteen and winning numerous cross country, road and track titles. At sixteen and seventeen years of age she won the New Zealand Secondary Schools road titles. Difficulties arising from Erin's involvement in the 1981 Springbok Tour protests led to her giving up sport and travelling to Australia in 1982. While there, in the following year she began to enter into triathlons which she won easily and well because of her earlier experiences with swimming and running. In triathlon she was to become the best in the world. In 1985 the New South Wales Championship was captured in a world record time by twenty minutes. The European and Nice Ironman Championships were also won in the same year. In 1987 Erin won the prestigious Hawaiian Ironman contest in a record time

breaking the previous record by seven minutes, a title she won again in 1989 and 1990, with second placings in 1988 and 1991. In three successive years from 1987 Erin Baker won the World Standard Distance Triathlon as well as the World Duathlon title in the U.S.A. in 1991. She is continuing to participate, remaining prominent in the fight for equal prize money in the sport with the principle and determination she demonstrated in her stance against apartheid. Pre-eminent recognition for Erin Baker's success came with the award to her of the 1989 New Zealand Sportsman of the Year trophy and her being voted in 1993 by American sporting journalists as the Woman Triathlete of the Decade.

Phillipa Baker started her rowing career after attending an open day at Queen Elizabeth II Park and coming under the subsequent guidance of Jackie Duncan of the Canterbury Rowing Club. Phillipa had almost instant success to the point where she has won three New Zealand heavy weight sculls titles and seventeen New Zealand titles in doubles, fours and eights. International success has been achieved with second placings in the World Championships in the light weight single sculls in 1986 and the 1989 light weight double sculls with Linda de Jong. Phillipa won a world title in 1991 in the light weight single sculls with the fastest time recorded over two thousand metres.

A remarkable and unique event occurred in 1991 when Phillipa Baker became New Zealand Sportsman of the Year to match the achievement of her sister two years before.

Over the last two decades there have been several women's crews from the Cure Boat Club who have won titles at South Island and New Zealand regattas. Amongst the most successful of these have been Katrina Higginson and Cara Greengrass whose pairing has brought them several titles at Junior and Secondary School level. Winning the Double Sculls events at the Maadi Cup National Schools' Regatta was a significant achievement for them. Katrina has also gained representative honours for New Zealand Juniors by being placed in the 1993 eights boat for events in Australia.

The Waimakariri area has always been an area where horse riders have flourished. There have been many active pony clubs in the area which provide opportunities for young riders to master the horsemanship skills necessary for success in horse shows. One of the region's most successful riders has been Florence West who represented New Zealand in tests against Australia as well as competing with distinction in events throughout New Zealand over a long period of time. Equestrian success requires riders to work long hours schooling and grooming their horses for both rider and mount to reach peak performances at the required time. Florence has proved to have an excellent touch in training the horses she has used as well as giving assistance to many riders.

The story of women in non traditional sporting roles has been exemplified by Margaret Clark (Rowlands) whose mountaineering exploits have brought her world wide fame. She has climbed in the Himalayas, leading all women teams to some of the world's most difficult mountain terrain. It is hard to imagine that this diminutive woman

would have the strength necessary to carry the enormous loads of equipment needed in such expeditions, let alone climb successfully. Margaret's courage and technique have certainly brought great mountain conquests both in New Zealand and overseas. Like a lot of the pioneering sportswomen Margaret had to prove herself doubly competent before mountaineers would acknowledge that women could succeed in this field.

Shooting is another sport not normally acknowledged as one where women could succeed but there have been noteworthy achievers in this field too. The Southbrook Rifle Club has been one where women are encouraged. They have had three women who have gained recognition at the South Island and New Zealand level. Margaret Bell and Suzanne Dalzell have been two who have represented the South Island in recent years but it is perhaps Raewyn Bushby who has gained most prominence. She has been selected to represent New Zealand in women's shooting events, proving to be a modern day "Annie Get Your Gun"!

Combining the water and outdoor themes of many successful women are the kayakers encouraged by Kaiapoi High School. Canoe Polo is a new sport which develops canoe handling skills in the safety of a swimming pool as well as providing the satisfaction of team sport competition. Kaiapoi has seen two very successful paddlers, Kate Wouters and Niki Adams, who have performed with distinction not only in this sport but in white water kayaking expeditions as well. Both women represented Canterbury and the South Island in the pool version of kayaking while also proving their skills on white water. As a measure of kayaking skills and blind courage there are challenges such as launching oneself off water falls! Niki has achieved this with a "kayak leap" off the Maruia Falls.

Mountaineering, kayaking and shooting are three adventure sports where women have faced challenges and succeeded. In what may be the last bastion of men's sport another local woman has proved successful. Jacqui Mauger has followed family footsteps onto the motor cycling circuit where she gained success in the South Island racing event. This sport must be one of the most demanding of events requiring split second decision making as well as an ice cold nerve - these qualities Jacqui has proved to have to a very high level.

Another of the small sports that have gained some prominence in the region has been orienteering. This sport requires physical running skills to cover the 7 or 8 km runs over rough terrain and intellectual ability to choose routes and read the maps. Jenni Adams started this sport with school experience and ended representing New Zealand at international events in New Zealand, Australia and Europe. Perhaps her best success was in winning the French Championship in 1992.

One of the most successful of sportswomen from the Waimakariri District has been Jan Morris. Jan was, over a period of time, New Zealand's most successful table tennis player representing the country at several world events. As well as this she had a monopoly on the national title in this sport. Starting as a promising junior, it was not long

before Jan was defeating most local players, many times her senior in years and experience. Canterbury and South Island titles in both singles and doubles were won by Jan in her long career. Although this was the sport she chose to specialise in Jan has great skills in many sports, being a natural ball player. Several other players have proved successful in table tennis too. Jenni Gray performed very well at Canterbury Junior level in the 1980's and more recently Fiona and Debbie Williams have proved worthy successors to her. Fiona has been chosen in a New Zealand Development Squad and is still developing in this demanding sport. Table tennis is a sport very well suited to rural life and many clubs provide opportunities for women and girls to compete either seriously or socially in throughout the district.

Another similar sport is badminton which can be played socially or competitively as the players require. Many clubs throughout the district have begun and been encouraged by the sort of dedicated women mentioned earlier. Diana Cowens is one such person in the Loburn area who was responsible for providing badminton in that community. In the 1950's Glenis Hopkinson achieved well at badminton and tennis.

Bowls has always been a sport that many women have been involved in, especially as it may be played by people of any age. The Rangiora Bowling Club - Ladies Section has been very active with many women enjoying the different types of competitions offered since it began with its first Annual Meeting in 1943. Without a doubt the most successful competitor has been Joan Rennie whose string of titles within the club spans two decades. Her first title was in 1965 and until she left the district in 1986, her name featured on the Club Honours Board. As well as dominating local competitions she was Champion of Champions at the Christchurch Centre in 1970, 1971 and 1982. Besides success in singles events she also competed with distinction in Pairs and Fours events. Rangiora had teams gaining centre titles in the seasons 1962-63 and 1963-64 - A.Petrie, M.Stickle, P.Brady and K.Wheeler in the first of these seasons and A.McHugh, E.Kalkman, P.Boyce and T.Tanner in the second. In the 1968-69 season Mrs Rennie led a successful team of R.Dolan, A.Harper, and D.Gibbon at the Christchurch Centre. Later, in 1989, another four comprising E.Williams, J.Beckingsale, O.Lindsay and F.Mahon repeated this success. The skill of Mrs Rennie was also illustrated by her two Pairs titles at the Centre with E.Heasley, in 1983, and G.Cusack in 1986.

Mention has already been made of golf with Betty Fraser's successes but with three golf Clubs within the area, Kaiapoi, Rangiora and Waimakariri Gorge, there have been many others who have gained great pleasure from golfing successes. Like bowls, golf is a sport that people can be involved in over a long period of time and many people have performed at a very high standard during their careers. One of the best known names from the area has been Mary Ensor (Sparrow) who was a regular member of the successful Canterbury Russell Grace Bowl teams of the 1960's. Her excellent standard was seen in both stroke play and match play. More recently there have been others to have achieved well.

From the Kaiapoi Club there have been players who have gained representative honours with Kerry Williams playing in the Premier New Zealand Teams' Event for Canterbury. Marie Naish and Rebecca Prestcott were two juniors who performed well and may yet attain further successes as they have by no means finished their careers.

With the mountains being very close for people living in the area, skiing has been a very popular pastime. Cecilia Wormersley was one of the very successful skiers for New Zealand during her representative years. Unfortunately gaining experience in competitive skiing is very expensive with travel to Europe being obligatory and Cecilia's time was before the days of corporate sponsorship. Had she had the support that sports people have gained in later years she could well have developed even further as her performances in European events showed a very real achievement. Others have competed in Europe gaining valuable experience and improving tremendously but none has gone on to Cecilia's level.

Athletics and swimming are two sports which require tremendous sacrifices of time to achieve national standards and while there have been many highly talented performers in these sports not all have gone on to the full time commitment necessary to reach this level. Shirleen Rollo from the North Canterbury Athletic Club is one who has shown the discipline necessary to reach representative honours. Her successes with middle distance events have gained her trips overseas, representing New Zealand Secondary Schools and New Zealand Emerging Athletes.

A swimmer to have achieved highly has been Rene Irvine who has won many gold medals at New Zealand Disabled Meets. She has also represented New Zealand in events overseas with great success. As a young swimmer she still has time to develop further and her courage and determination as well as her talent are very likely to bring her higher rewards. In the field of coaching swimming and life-saving throughout the whole area Helen Turnbull's contribution has been unparalleled. At the Women's Suffrage Sportswomen's Dinner she was a very popular winner of the coaching category. Many young people owe their success in swimming events to Helen's dedicated efforts and many more can be thankful to her for helping them to master the skills of swimming. Surf Life-Saving, too owes much to Helen's work and this is especially true for the Waikuku Club.

While the Waimakariri District has been well known for its water based and adventure sports it has also played an important part in bringing unconventional sports to the attention of women. Over the years there have been successful women's soccer teams, rugby and league teams and currently touch rugby is proving to be a sport where many women flourish. During the summer evenings it is possible to see hundreds of people taking part in this very popular pastime.

An activity that has had a big part to play in recreation for many young girls has been marching where team work and discipline lead to a different sort of activity from other competitive sports. While there is no need for hand eye co-ordination there is nevertheless tremendous co-

ordination of movement required. Both Rangiora and Kaiapoi have had strong clubs over the years but like a lot of activities there is a tendency for the enthusiasm to go in waves. So much depends on the amount of time the "loving" volunteers can put in and sometimes there are just not enough hours in the day for all activities to be supported as people would like.

Not to be forgotten are the many women who have played a very large part in the running of men's sports. There are many women who have taken committee roles, or run the afternoon teas, the catering and fund raising for cricket, rugby and soccer to name but a few. These women are often the unsung heroines in the community, for without their efforts there would not be the rich recreational and social outlet for the many male players who have benefitted over the years. Few rugby games are played without the devoted support of mothers, wives and girlfriends!

Unfortunately there are many people whose contribution has not been acknowledged in these pages and for this we apologise but for them there is still the tremendous gratitude from a community that needs their unsung efforts. Perhaps there will be an opportunity before another hundred years goes by, to really mark their efforts.

Chapter Six -

WOMEN AND THE ARTS.

From the time of earliest settlement in the Waimakariri, women have contributed to the cultural enrichment of everyday life.

In pre - European times Maori women used their talents and skills in weaving to create functional treasures (taonga), enjoyed by their whole community. While there is no equivalent word for the European concept of art in the Maori language, the investment of skill, protocol and knowledge passed from one generation to the next, shown in the handling of the materials and the use of symbolic patterns told of the close relationship between the land and the people and their history and culture. The taonga they made assumed a spiritual entity which spoke to their people about women's lives; their teaching role, the care of the house and family and spiritual values important for the continuing welfare of the iwi. Craft became art, and art and life were one.

In the European context these taonga would be seen as craft objects as the women's expertise was used to make clothes, containers and decorative panels for the wharenuī. The women used materials such as harakeke (flax) from the natural environment in their plaiting and weaving and in doing so reflected another aspect of Maori culture, the potential for the return of the material to its environmental source when it had outlived its human use. Thus it signified the integration of the people with the land and their dependence on each other for continued life. Because these objects were intended for use by the whole community they were produced by women working together in groups. Most have been lost and what has survived from the last century (usually bought and preserved by museums) cannot be attributed to individual women.

A kakahu (cloak) held by the Canterbury Museum is such a taonga. It was gifted to the museum from the collection of the Reverend C A Fraer, the founder of Te Waipounamu. It is thought to have been made in Tuahiwi and it was certainly worn by a woman of standing from the iwi for ceremonies on the Tuahiwi marae. Though now very worn it still testifies to the skill of its makers and is an object of great beauty.