

GOAL! Pushing one through the nets is a reason to celebrate.

Eager campers await a throw-in during a fun game-situation of boys v. girls. In this one, the girls won.

Kids kick-start summer with this camp

By **CHUCK HLAVA**
Citizen Sports Editor

More than 80 kids are better and more knowledgeable soccer players today than they were at the beginning of June.

That's because they attended the 22 Stars Soccer Development 5-day camp, which ended last Friday.

The youngsters learned everything from the basic rudiments of 'futbal' to footwork, passing and strategy.

And they learned it from players and coaches who have dribbled on the international soccer stages.

Brendan Keyes of 22 Stars brought in Noel Mulhall straight from Ireland. Mulhall is a former Irish women's national coach whose team stayed unbeaten at home for four years against England, Sweden, Holland, Finland, Scotland and Wales.

Keyes' coaching prowess has been a familiar fixture in the Clear Lake-Friendswood-

Pearland area, and also Houston, was more than pleased with the camp's progress and the young players going through their paces at the various fields.

"It's been very, very good," Keyes said. "I am surprised at the talent we've had here," he added, referring to players sent to the camp by several soccer clubs.

The camp was held at Bay Area Blvd., in Friendswood.

Mulhall didn't mind the heat this time. At least it was better

than his first camp visit here 11 years ago.

He remembered that camp very well.

"It was 104," Mulhall recalled, "we had several sessions a day. We had three hours in the morning and three hours in the evening.

"When I got home I spent a week in bed," he added with a smile.

As an international coach, Mulhall talks about the old "WM" system, which includes a

center forward, something not seen anymore.

"It's the best system for coaching kids," he said. "We used it (on the national team) and it worked very well. (Opposing) players worry about us instead of us worrying about them."

Mulhall is much at home coaching kids and enjoys it very much.

• When told that kids are the future of soccer, he said, without missing a beat, "Kids are the future for the world."

In Ireland, Mulhall is director of coaching at a soccer school which fields more than two dozen teams. He always diagramed his teams with his philosophy.

"You pick your system to suit your players," he pointed out.

England and Ireland were well represented. With Mulhall and Keyes busy with their camp stations, so was Gerry Campbell who flew in from England to help with the sessions.

The campers, ranging in age from 5 and up to teenage years, listened and learned.

The camp is "Pretty cool," according to Chase LeGravi of Houston. "The trainers are great at teaching us things we don't know. We're all getting better."

Ditto on that for League City's Adelina Whitehead.

"It's taught me new stuff and I love it," Whitehead said. "My family is really proud of me."

"It's been real fun and we learned new things," said Douglas Leighton of Pasadena, "and I like their accents."



Campers, trainers and coaches at the 22 Stars Soccer Development camp take a well deserved break and pose for a photo last week.

Citizen photos by Chuck Hlava

CAMP

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Keys, Mulhall and the staff of six trainers handled the enthusiastic campers with a professional flair. Keys was appreciative for being able to get Dr. Keith Bergeson of Bergeson

Chiropractic in Friendswood for his time on the field ready for any emergency.

From the first day's 3-hour session to the final day, with pizzas for everyone donated by Angelo's Pizza & Pasta, the

camp was a definite success. "This worked out fantastic," Keys said. "Couldn't have gone any better or been more fun."

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Kids find a home at this camp - at least for a while

By **CHUCK HLAVA**
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To their delight, 34 kids went to a soccer camp last week.

That's nothing really new, but these kids were different.

They were from the Spaulding for Children, an adoption and foster care organization on the Katy Freeway in Houston.

The kids were invited by Brendan Keyes of 22 Stars Soccer Development for the camp held off Bay Area Blvd. in Friendswood.

The Spaulding kids joined 50 other campers in a five-day session, with each day lasting three hours. They got to meet and mingle with Noel Mulhall, the former Irish women's national coach, and other coaches and trainers.

This camp was just what the doctor ordered.

"This is so great," said Staci Prince, Adoption and Foster Care Family Coordinator.

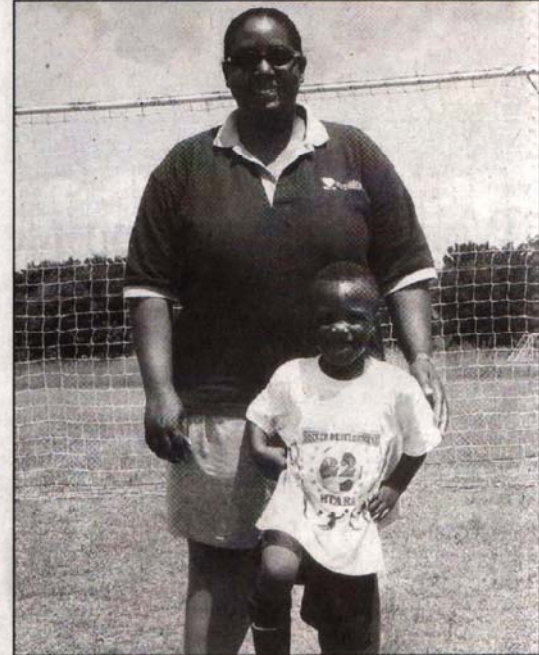
"(Brendan Keyes) graciously donated the spots for our kids. I brought 34 of them."

Prince's charges ranged in age from 5 to 17. It was the first time for some of them to be in a camp, much less an actual sports camp.

Children's Protective Services actually presides of the kids and Spaulding takes them out for field trips and other outings, but the real job for Prince is to find the kids a good home for adoption or foster care.

The kids come from broken homes. Many are battered kids. Keyes' welcome mat was a godsend to them.

"I love these kids like they were my own," Prince said.



Spaulding for Children adoption and foster care family coordinator Staci Prince enjoyed watching her 'kids' at the soccer camp. Her beaming son, Jimmy, was one happy camper.

Citizen photo by Chuck Hlava

Actually, some of them now are. She has adopted two of the children.

Prince knows the scene very well. She was adopted as a child.

Now she is doing what she can to help.

"Adoption is my life," she said. "You hate to see things like this, but it's there. They're CPS children and we want to

find them all a good home."

The Spaulding kids mixed well with the other campers. You couldn't tell them apart. Kids are kids.

For information visit www.spauldingforchildren.org.

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Top photo: Former Irish women's national coach Noel Mulhall (left) and Gerry Campbell of England pose with three of the campers. From left, Adelina Whitehead of League City, Chase LeGrand of Houston and Douglas Leighton of Pasadena. Above, several of the girls at camp get together for a shot. Right: Brendan Keyes of 22 Stars Soccer Development gives pointers to the campers.

Citizen photos by Chuck Hlava

